



# Advisory team not expected to give freeway decision soon

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Some Ahwatukee Foothills residents want to put the brakes on any proposed South Mountain Freeway talks while others are reserving their opinions until they can get a better picture of how it would affect the area.

A South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team meeting Thursday is expected to answer some questions. The group is expected to discuss the Arizona Department of Transportation's projected freeway impacts on the environment, commercial/industrial areas and emergency response capabilities.

The committee will also find out what an environmental-impact statement would look like. ADOT is preparing a draft environmental-impact statement that will talk about air quality and other issues.

It's not expected that the committee will make a recommendation on whether to build the freeway on Thursday.

The proposed freeway would run along Pecos Road and cut through South Mountain Park, connecting to Interstate 10 at 55th Avenue.

ADOT and Maricopa Association of Governments officials contend that the freeway would alleviate traffic congestion in Ahwatukee and reduce Valley traffic commuters' frustrations from the east to the west.

"I think that they've heard from both sides of the issue," Ahwatukee resident Tom Goodman said. "One thing they need to know is even if they built it on Pecos it's not going to change the driving habits of someone like me."

Goodman commutes from Ahwatukee to north Phoenix for work, taking I-10 to either the I-17 or Arizona 51 North. He said it takes him 45 minutes to an hour to make the drive one way but he said he does not want the South Mountain Freeway to run along Pecos Road because of its impact on Ahwatukee.

"I'm worried about increased crime and the shape of Ahwatukee," Goodman said. "If there are trucks stopped in interchanges put out there sometimes you don't have the best elements, hitchhikers, people pulling into neighborhoods. It will increase crime, decrease property values."

Ahwatukee resident Chevy Humphrey said she is "on the fence" about the proposed freeway. Ahwatukee resident Karen Warren said she opposes the freeway though it "would ease traffic for some people."

"Its alignment would affect schools that have been longstanding," Warren said. "I can't imagine that there wouldn't be an environmental impact with it."

She said she would rather see people use the city's park-and-ride on 40th Street just north of Pecos Road to alleviate

traffic congestion than see a freeway built along Pecos.

The advisory team plans to tour the proposed freeway route in October.